

Chapter Title: The Rule of St. Benedict

Book Title: Monks, Bishops, and Pagans

Book Subtitle: Christian Culture in Gaul and Italy, 500-700

Book Editor(s): William C. McDermott, Edward Peters

Published by: University of Pennsylvania Press. (1975)

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv512r5f.6>

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The Rule of St. Benedict

The translation of the Prologue is based on the text of Cuthbert Butler, Sancti Benedicti Regula Monachorum (Freiburg, 1912), pp. 1-8. Henderson's text is based on that in Migne, Patrologia Latina, Vol. 66. Italicized passages indicate quotations from Scripture.

Prologue

Listen, my son, to the teachings of your master, and incline the ear of your heart; receive joyfully the warnings of your loving teacher and perform them usefully, so that you may return to him through the works of obedience, from whom you strayed through the vice of disobedience. I direct my teaching to you, who, by renouncing your own will and enrolling in the army of Christ the true King, assume the most powerful and brightest armor of obedience.

First, whatever good task you undertake, pray God most intensely to bring it to perfection, so that He who deigns to count us among the number of His children ought never to sorrow for any of our wicked acts. For He must always be served by His good things that He has given us, so that He will never, like an angry father, disinherit His children. Nor, like a fearsome master, angered by our evil deeds, deliver to perpetual punishment His wicked servants, who do not wish to follow Him into glory.

Let us rise up then, Scripture urging us, saying: *Now is the hour for us to rise out of sleep.* Let us open our eyes to the divine light, for we hear the divine voice daily imploring, which warns us saying: *Today, if you should hear His voice, harden not your hearts,* and further: *Let him who has ears to hear, hear what the*

Spirit says unto the churches. And what does the Spirit say? Come, O my son, listen to me; I will teach thee the fear of God. Run, while you still have the light of life, lest the shadow of death overtake you unawares.

And God, seeking His workman in the midst of the people, cries out to him saying: *Which of you is the man who desires life and wishes to witness good days?* And you, if you hear Him and respond "I am he," then God says to you: *If you wish to have true and perpetual life, forbid thy tongue from wickedness, keep your lips from speaking lies. Turn away from evil and do good. Seek after peace and follow it.* And when you shall have done these things, My eyes shall be upon you and My ears will listen to your prayers. And even before you invoke Me, I say to you: Behold, I am here. What can be sweeter to us than the voice of God inviting us? Behold, in His love the Lord shows us the way of life.

Our loins, therefore, are bound up by faith and the observance of good works; let us walk in His path by the guide of the Gospel, so that we may merit the vision of Him who calls us into His kingdom. If we wish to live in the tabernacle of His kingdom, we shall not, save by our good acts alone. Let us ask the Lord, with the prophet saying: *Lord, who shall dwell in Thy house, and who shall rest in Thy holy Mountain?* After this question, let us hear God responding and showing us the way to His tabernacle, saying: *He only who walks without a stain and does justice; who speaks only the truth in his heart; who does not speak in lies; who does no injury to his neighbor; who shares no reproach against his neighbor.* Whoever has denied the malign demon, spewing him forth from his heart with all his wicked counsels and has taken his wicked thoughts while they were still new and cast them before Christ, he and others like him, fearing God, not taking excessive pride in their good works, knowing that the good in them is not of their own creation but from God, praise God who works in them saying: *Not to us O Lord, not to us, but to Thine own name give the glory.* Thus the Apostle Paul imputed nothing of his preaching to himself saying: *Thanks be to God that I am what I am, and Let whoever rejoices rejoice in the Lord.*

And as the Lord says in the Gospel: *Whoever hears these words of Mine and does what they direct, I will make him like the wise*

man who builds his house upon a rock, and when the rivers flooded and the winds blew and the rains pounded against it, it did not fall, because it was built upon a rock. The Lord, having given us these assurances, awaits us daily to respond by our deeds to His holy commands. Therefore the days of our life are extended because it is necessary that we change our evil ways. As the Apostle says: *Do you not know that God's kind waiting invites you to repent?* For the merciful God says *I wish not the death of the sinner, but that he should turn again to Me and that he should live.*

Since we have asked the Lord about those who shall dwell in His tabernacle, we have heard His instructions for those who will dwell there. Let us fulfill the duties of such citizens! Therefore our hearts and our bodies must be trained and drilled under the holy precepts of obedience, and whatever shortcomings we have by nature, let us ask God out of His grace to complement by His aid. And if, fleeing the punishments of Gehenna, we wish to reach eternal life while there is yet time remaining, while we are still in the flesh, and while there remains yet light along the way to fulfill these instructions, we must all hasten and act now in such a way that we may win eternity. We are about to found, therefore, a school for the Lord's service; in the organization of which we trust that we shall ordain nothing severe and nothing burdensome. But even if, the demands of justice dictating it, something a little irksome shall be the result, for the purpose of amending vices or preserving charity;—thou shalt not therefore, struck by fear, flee the way of salvation, which can not be entered upon except through a narrow entrance. But as one's way of life and one's faith progress, the heart becomes broadened, and, with the unutterable sweetness of love, the way of the mandates of the Lord is traversed. Thus, never departing from His guidance, continuing in the monastery in His teaching until death, through patience we are made partakers in Christ's passion, in order that we may merit to be companions in His kingdom.

1. *Concerning the kinds of monks and their manner of living.* It is manifest that there are four kinds of monks. The cenobites are the first kind; that is, those living in a monastery, serving under a rule or an abbot. Then the second kind is that of the anchorites; that is, the hermits,— those who, not by the new fervour of a conversion

but by the long probation of life in a monastery, have learned to fight against the devil, having already been taught by the solace of many. They, having been well prepared in the army of brothers for the solitary fight of the hermit, being secure now without the consolation of another, are able, God helping them, to fight with their own hand or arm against the vices of the flesh or of their thoughts.

But a third very bad kind of monks are the sarabaites, approved by no rule, experience being their teacher, as with the gold which is tried in the furnace. But, softened after the manner of lead, keeping faith with the world by their works, they are known through their tonsure to lie to God. These being shut up by twos or threes, or, indeed, alone, without a shepherd, not in the Lord's but in their own sheep-folds,—their law is the satisfaction of their desires. For whatever they think good or choice, this they call holy; and what they do not wish, this they consider unlawful. But the fourth kind of monks is the kind which is called gyratory. During their whole life they are guests, for three or four days at a time, in the cells of the different monasteries, throughout the various provinces; always wandering and never stationary, given over to the service of their own pleasures and the joys of the palate, and in every way worse than the sarabaites. Concerning the most wretched way of living of all of such monks it is better to be silent than to speak. These things therefore being omitted, let us proceed, with the aid of God, to treat of the best kind, the cenobites.

2. *What the Abbot should be like.* An abbot who is worthy to preside over a monastery ought always to remember what he is called, and carry out with his deeds the name of a Superior. For he is believed to be Christ's representative, since he is called by His name, the apostle saying: *Ye have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we call Abba, Father.* And so the abbot should not—grant that he may not—teach, or decree, or order, any thing apart from the precept of the Lord; but his order or teaching should be sprinkled with the ferment of divine justice in the minds of his disciples. Let the abbot always be mindful that, at the tremendous judgment of God, both things will be weighed in the balance: his teaching and the obedience of his disciples. And let the abbot know that whatever the father of the

family finds of less utility among the sheep is laid to the fault of the shepherd. Only in a case where the whole diligence of their pastor shall have been bestowed on an unruly and disobedient flock, and his whole care given to their morbid actions, shall that pastor, absolved in the judgment of the Lord, be free to say to the Lord with the prophet: *I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart, I have declared Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation, but they despising have scorned me.* And then at length let the punishment for the disobedient sheep under his care be death itself prevailing against them. Therefore, when any one receives the name of abbot, he ought to rule over his disciples with a double teaching; that is, let him show forth all good and holy things by deeds more than by words. So that to ready disciples he may propound the mandates of God in words; but, to the hard-hearted and the more simple-minded, he may show forth the divine precepts by his deeds. But as to all the things that he has taught to his disciples to be wrong, he shall show by his deeds that they are not to be done; lest, preaching to others, he himself shall be found worthy of blame, and lest God may say at some time to him a sinner: *What hast thou to do to declare My statutes or that thou should'st take My covenant in thy mouth. Seeing that thou hatest instruction and casteth My words behind thee; and why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?* He shall make no distinction of persons in the monastery. One shall not be more cherished than another, unless it be the one whom he finds excelling in good works or in obedience. A free-born man shall not be preferred to one coming from servitude, unless there be some other reasonable cause. But if, justice demanding that it should be thus, it seems good to the abbot, he shall do this no matter what the rank shall be. But otherwise they shall keep their own places; for whether we be bond or free we are all one in Christ; and, under one God, we perform an equal service of subjection; for God is no respecter of persons. Only in this way is a distinction made by Him concerning us: if we are found humble and surpassing others in good works. Therefore let him (the abbot) have equal charity for all: let the same discipline be administered in all cases according to merit. In his teaching

indeed the abbot ought always to observe that form laid down by the apostle when he says: *reprove, rebuke, exhort*. That is, mixing seasons with seasons, blandishments with terrors, let him display the feeling of a severe yet devoted master. He should, namely, rebuke more severely the unruly and the turbulent. The obedient, moreover, and the gentle and the patient, he should exhort, that they may progress to higher things. But the negligent and scorners, we warn him to admonish and reprove. Nor let him conceal the sins of the erring: but, in order that he may prevail, let him pluck them out by the roots as soon as they begin to spring up; being mindful of the danger of Eli the priest of Shiloh. And the more honest and intelligent minds, indeed, let him rebuke with words, with a first or second admonition; but the wicked and the hard-hearted and the proud, or the disobedient, let him restrain at the very beginning of their sin by castigation of the body, as it were, with whips: knowing that it is written: *A fool is not bettered by words*. And again: *Strike thy son with the rod and thou shalt deliver his soul from death*. The abbot ought always to remember what he is, to remember what he is called, and to know that from him to whom more is committed, the more is demanded. And let him know what a difficult and arduous thing he has undertaken,—to rule the souls and aid the morals of many. And in one case indeed with blandishments, in another with rebukes, in another with persuasion—according to the quality or intelligence of each one,—he shall so conform and adapt himself to all, that not only shall he not suffer detriment to come to the flock committed to him, but shall rejoice in the increase of a good flock. Above all things, let him not, dissimulating or undervaluing the safety of the souls committed to him, give more heed to transitory and earthly and passing things: but let him always reflect that he has undertaken to rule souls for which he is to render account. And, lest perchance he enter into strife for a lesser matter, let him remember that it is written: *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*. And again: *They that fear Him shall lack nothing*. And let him know that he who undertakes to rule souls must prepare to render account. And, whatever number of brothers he knows that he has under his care, let him know for

certain that at the day of judgment he shall render account to God for all their souls; his own soul without doubt being included. And thus, always fearing the future interrogation of the shepherd concerning the flocks entrusted to him, while keeping free from foreign interests he is rendered careful for his own. And when, by his admonitions, he administers correction to others, he is himself cleansed from his vices.

3. *About calling in the brethren to take council.* As often as anything especial is to be done in the monastery, the abbot shall call together the whole congregation, and shall himself explain the question at issue. And, having heard the advice of the brethren, he shall think it over by himself, and shall do what he considers most advantageous. And for this reason, moreover, we have said that all ought to be called to take counsel: because often it is to a younger person that God reveals what is best. The brethren, moreover, with all subjection of humility, ought so to give their advice, that they do not presume boldly to defend what seems good to them; but it should rather depend on the judgment of the abbot; so that whatever he decides to be the more salutary, they should all agree to it. But even as it behoves the disciples to obey the master, so it is fitting that he should providently and justly arrange all matters. In all things, indeed, let all follow the Rule as their guide; and let no one rashly deviate from it. Let no one in the monastery follow the inclination of his own heart; and let no one boldly presume to dispute with his abbot, within or without the monastery. But, if he should so presume, let him be subject to the discipline of the Rule. The abbot, on the other hand, shall do all things fearing the Lord and observing the Rule; knowing that he, without a doubt, shall have to render account to God as to a most impartial judge, for all his decisions. But if any lesser matters for the good of the monastery are to be decided upon, he shall employ the counsel of the elder members alone, since it is written: *Do all things with counsel, and after it is done thou wilt not repent.*

4. *What are the instruments of good works.**

5. *Concerning obedience.* The first grade of humility is obedience without delay. This becomes those who, on account of

*Here follow seventy-two quotations from the Bible.

the holy service which they have professed, or on account of the fear of hell or the glory of eternal life consider nothing dearer to them than Christ: so that, so soon as anything is commanded by their superior, they may not know how to suffer delay in doing it, even as if it were a divine command. Concerning whom the Lord said: *As soon as he heard of Me he obeyed Me*. And again He said to the learned men: *He who heareth you heareth Me*. Therefore let all such, straightway leaving their own affairs and giving up their own will, with unoccupied hands and leaving incomplete what they were doing—the foot of obedience being foremost,—follow with their deeds the voice of him who orders. And, as it were, in the same moment, let the aforesaid command of the master and the perfected work of the disciple—both together in the swiftness of the fear of God,—be called into being by those who are possessed with a desire of advancing to eternal life. And therefore let them seize the narrow way of which the Lord says: *Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life*. Thus, not living according to their own judgment nor obeying their own desires and pleasures, but walking under another's judgment and command, passing their time in monasteries, let them desire an abbot to rule over them. Without doubt all such live up to that precept of the Lord in which He says: *I am not come to do My own will but the will of Him that sent Me*. . . .

6. *Concerning silence*. Let us do as the prophet says: *I said, I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue, I have kept my mouth with a bridle: I was dumb with silence, I held my peace even from good; and my sorrow was stirred*. Here the prophet shows that if one ought at times, for the sake of silence, to refrain from good sayings; how much more, as a punishment for sin, ought one to cease from evil words. . . . And therefore, if anything is to be asked of the prior, let it be asked with all humility and subjection of reverence; lest one seem to speak more than is fitting. Scurrilities, however, or idle words and those exciting laughter, we condemn in all places with a lasting prohibition: nor do we permit a disciple to open his mouth for such sayings.

7. *Concerning humility*. . . . The sixth grade of humility is, that a monk be contented with all lowness or extremity, and

consider himself, with regard to everything which is enjoined on him, as a poor and unworthy workman; saying to himself with the prophet: *I was reduced to nothing and was ignorant; I was made as the cattle before Thee, and I am always with Thee.* The seventh grade of humility is, not only that he, with his tongue, pronounce himself viler and more worthless than all; but that he also believe it in the innermost workings of his heart; humbling himself and saying with the prophet, etc. . . . The eighth degree of humility is that a monk do nothing except what the common rule of the monastery, or the example of his elders, urges him to do. The ninth degree of humility is that a monk restrain his tongue from speaking; and, keeping silence, do not speak until he is spoken to. The tenth grade of humility is that he be not ready, and easily inclined, to laugh. . . . The eleventh grade of humility is that a monk, when he speaks, speak slowly and without laughter, humbly with gravity, using few and reasonable words; and that he be not loud of voice. . . . The twelfth grade of humility is that a monk, shall not only with his heart but also with his body, always show humility to all who see him: that is, when at work, in the oratory, in the monastery, in the garden, on the road, in the fields. And everywhere, sitting or walking or standing, let him always be with head inclined, his looks fixed upon the ground; remembering every hour that he is guilty of his sins. Let him think that he is already being presented before the tremendous judgment of God, saying always to himself in his heart what that publican of the gospel, fixing his eyes on the earth, said: *Lord I am not worthy, I a sinner, so much as to lift up mine eyes unto Heaven.*

8. *Concerning the divine offices at night.* In the winter time, that is from the Calends of November until Easter, according to what is reasonable, they must rise at the eighth hour of the night, so that they rest a little more than half the night, and rise when they have already digested. But let the time that remains after vigils be kept for meditation by those brothers who are in any way behind hand with the psalter or lessons. From Easter, moreover, until the aforesaid Calends of November, let the hour of keeping vigils be so arranged that, a short interval being observed in which the brethren may go out for the necessities of nature, the matins, which are always to take place with the dawning light, may straightway follow.

9. *How many psalms are to be said at night.* In the winter first of all the verse shall be said: *Make haste oh God to deliver me; make haste to help me oh God.* Then, secondly, there shall be said three times: *Oh Lord open Thou my lips and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.* To which is to be subjoined the third psalm and the *Gloria*. After this the ninety-fourth psalm is to be sung antiphonally or in unison. The Ambrosian chant shall then follow: then six psalms antiphonally. These having been said, the abbot shall, with the verse mentioned, give the blessing. And all being seated upon the benches, there shall be read in turn from the Scriptures—following out the analogy—three lessons; between which also three responses shall be sung. Two responses shall be said without the *Gloria*; but, after the third lesson, he who chants shall say the *Gloria*. And, when the Cantor begins to say this, all shall straightway rise from their seats out of honour and reverence for the holy Trinity. Books, moreover, of the Old as well as the New Testament of Divine authority shall be read at the Vigils; but also expositions of them which have been made by the most celebrated orthodox teachers and catholic Fathers. Moreover, after these three lessons with their responses, shall follow other six psalms to be sung with the Alleluia. After this a lesson of the Apostle shall follow, to be recited by heart; and verses and the supplication of the Litany, that is the *Kyrie eleison*: and thus shall end the nocturnal vigils.

10. *How in summer the nocturnal praise shall be carried on.* From Easter moreover until the Calends of November, the whole quantity of psalmody, as has been said above, shall be observed: except that the lessons from the Scripture, on account of the shortness of the nights, shall not be read at all. But in place of those three lessons, one from the Old Testament shall be said by memory, and a short response shall follow it. And everything else shall be carried out as has been said; that is, so that never less than the number of twelve psalms shall be said at nocturnal vigils; excepting the third and ninety-fourth psalms.

11. *How vigils shall be conducted on Sundays.* On Sundays they shall rise earlier for vigils. In which vigils let the following measure be observed; that is, after six psalms and a verse having been sung—as we arranged above,—all sitting down in their

places and in order upon the benches, there shall be read from Scripture, as we said above, four lessons with their responses. Only in the fourth response, however, shall the *Gloria* be said by the Cantor. When he begins this, straightway all shall rise with reverence. After which lessons shall follow other six psalms in order, antiphonally, like the former ones; and verses. After which, there shall again be read other four lessons with their responses, in the same order as above. After which there shall be said three canticles, which the abbot shall have chosen from the prophets: which canticles shall be sung with the Alleluia. Then after the verse has been said and the abbot has given his benediction, there shall be read other four lessons from the New Testament, in the same order as above. After the fourth response, moreover, the abbot shall begin the hymn: *We praise Thee O Lord*. This being finished the abbot shall read a lesson from the Gospel with honour and trembling, all standing. This being read through, all shall answer "Amen." And the abbot shall straightway cause the hymn: *It is a good thing to praise the Lord* to follow; and, the benediction being given, they shall begin matins. This order of vigils at all times of summer as well as winter shall be similarly observed on Sunday: unless by chance (may it not happen) they rise too late, and something from the lessons or responses must be shortened: as to which they must take the greatest care lest it occur. But if it happen, he through whose neglect it came about shall give proper satisfaction for it to God in the oratory* . . .

16. *How Divine Service shall be held through the day.* As the prophet says: *Seven times in the day do I praise Thee*. Which sacred number of seven will thus be fulfilled by us if, at matins, at the first, third, sixth, ninth hours, at vesper time and at "completorium" we perform the duties of our service; for it is of these hours of the day that he said: *Seven times in the day do I praise Thee*. For, concerning nocturnal vigils, the same prophet says: *At midnight I arose to confess unto Thee*. Therefore, at these times, let us give thanks to our Creator concerning the judgments of His righteousness; that is, at matins, etc . . . , and at night we will rise and confess to Him.* . . .

*Long lists of psalms follow.

18. *In what order the psalms are to be said.* The order of the daily psalmody having been arranged, all the rest of the psalms that remain shall be equally divided among the vigils of the seven nights, separating, indeed, the psalms that are the longest among them; and twelve shall be appointed for each night. Laying great stress upon this fact, however, that if this distribution of psalms be not pleasing to any one, he shall arrange it otherwise if he think best; provided he sees to it under all circumstances that every week the entire psalter, to the number of 150 psalms, is said. And on Sunday at Vigils it shall always be begun anew. For those monks show a too scanty proof of their devotion, who, during the course of a week, sing less than the Psalter with its customary canticles: inasmuch as we read that our holy Fathers in one day rigidly fulfilled that, which would that we—lukewarm as we are—might perform in an entire week.

19. *Concerning the art of singing.* Whereas we believe that there is a divine presence, and that the eyes of the Lord look down everywhere upon the good and the evil: chiefly then, without any doubt, we may believe that this is the case when we are assisting at divine service. Therefore let us always be mindful of what the prophet says: *Serve the Lord in all fear*; and again, *Sing wisely*; and, *in the sight of the angels I will sing unto Thee*. Therefore let us consider how we ought to conduct ourselves before the face of the Divinity and His angels, and let us so stand and sing that our voice may accord with our intention.

20. *Concerning reverence for prayer.* If when to powerful men we wish to suggest anything, we do not presume to do it unless with reverence and humility: how much more should we supplicate with all humility, and devotion of purity, God who is the Lord of all. And let us know that we are heard, not for much speaking, but for purity of heart and compunction of tears. And, therefore, prayer ought to be brief and pure; unless perchance it be prolonged by the influence of the inspiration of the divine grace. When assembled together, then, let the prayer be altogether brief; and, the sign being given by the prior, let all rise together.

21. *Concerning the deans of the monastery.* If the congregation be a larger one, let there be elected from it brothers of good

standing and of holy character; and let them be made deans. And they shall be watchful over their decanates in all things, according to the mandates of God and the precepts of their abbot. And the deans elected shall be such that the abbot may safely share his burdens with them. And they shall not be elected according to order, but according to their merit of life and their advancement in wisdom. And, if any one of these deans be found perchance to be blameworthy, being puffed up by pride of something; and if, being warned once and again and a third time, he be unwilling to better himself,—let him be deposed; and let another, who is worthy, be chosen in his place. And we decree the like concerning the provost.

22. *How the monks shall sleep.* They shall sleep separately in separate beds. They shall receive positions for their beds, after the manner of their characters, according to the dispensation of their abbot. If it can be done, they shall all sleep in one place. If, however, their number do not permit it, they shall rest by tens or twenties, with elders who will concern themselves about them. A candle shall always be burning in that same cell until early in the morning. They shall sleep clothed, and girt with belts or with ropes; and they shall not have their knives at their sides while they sleep, lest perchance in a dream they should wound the sleepers. And let the monks be always on the alert; and, when the signal is given, rising without delay, let them hasten to mutually prepare themselves for the service of God—with all gravity and modesty, however. The younger brothers shall not have beds by themselves, but interspersed among those of the elder ones. And when they rise for the service of God, they shall exhort each other mutually with moderation, on account of the excuses that those who are sleepy are inclined to make.

23. *Concerning excommunication for faults.* If any one is found to be a scorner—being contumacious or disobedient, or a murmurer, or one acting in any way contrary to the holy Rule, and to the precepts of his elders: let such a one, according to the teaching of our Lord, be admonished once, and a second time, secretly, by his elders. If he do not amend his ways, he shall be rebuked publicly in the presence of all. But if, even then, he do not better himself—if he understands how great the penalty is—he shall be

subject to excommunication. But, if he is a wicked man, he shall be given over to corporal punishment.

24. *What ought to be the measure of the excommunication.* According to the amount of the fault the measure of the excommunication or of the discipline ought to be extended: which amount of the faults shall be determined by the judgment of the abbot. If any brother, however, be taken in lighter faults, he shall be prevented from participating at table. With regard to one deprived of participation at table, moreover, this shall be the regulation: that he shall not start a psalm or a chant in the oratory, or recite a lesson, until he has atoned. The refreshment of food, moreover, he shall take alone, after the refreshment of the brothers. So that if, for example, the brothers eat at the sixth hour, that brother shall do so at the ninth; if the brothers at the ninth, then he at Vespers; until by suitable satisfaction he gains pardon.

25. *Concerning graver faults.* That brother, moreover, who is held guilty of a graver fault shall be suspended at the same time from table and from the oratory. None of the brothers may in any way consort with him, or have speech with him. He shall be alone at the labour enjoined upon him, persisting in the struggle of penitence; knowing that terrible sentence of the Apostle who said that such a man was given over to the destruction of the flesh in order that his soul might be saved at the day of the Lord. The refectation of food moreover he shall take alone, in the measure and at the time that the abbot shall appoint as suitable for him. Nor shall he be blessed by any one who passes by, nor shall any food be given him.

26. *Concerning those who, without being ordered by the abbot, associate with the excommunicated.* If any brother presume, without an order of the abbot, in any way to associate with an excommunicated brother, or to speak with him, or to give an order to him: he shall suffer the same penalty of excommunication.

27. *What care the abbot should exercise with regard to the excommunicated.* With all solicitude the abbot shall exercise care with regard to delinquent brothers: *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.* And therefore he ought to use every means, as a wise physician, to send in as it were secret

consolers—that is, wise elder brothers who, as it were secretly, shall console the wavering brother and lead him to the atonement of humility. And they shall comfort him lest he be swallowed up by overmuch sorrow. On the contrary, as the same apostle says, charity shall be confirmed in him, and he shall be prayed for by all. For the abbot should greatly exert his solicitude, and take care with all sagacity and industry, lest he lose any of the sheep entrusted to him. For he should know that he has undertaken the care of weak souls, not the tyranny over sound ones. And he shall fear the threat of the prophet through whom the Lord says: *Ye did take that which ye saw to be strong, and that which was weak ye did cast out.* And let him imitate the pious example of the good Shepherd, who, leaving the ninety and nine sheep upon the mountains, went out to seek the one sheep that had gone astray: and He had such compassion upon its infirmity, that He deigned to place it upon His sacred shoulders, and thus to carry it back to the flock.

28. *Concerning those who, being often rebuked, do not amend.* If any brother, having frequently been rebuked for any fault, do not amend even after he has been excommunicated, a more severe rebuke shall fall upon him;—that is, the punishment of the lash shall be inflicted upon him. But if he do not even then amend; or, if perchance—which God forbid,—swelled with pride he try even to defend his works: then the abbot shall act as a wise physician. If he have applied the fomentations, the ointments of exhortation, the medicaments of the Divine Scriptures; if he have proceeded to the last blasting of excommunication, or to blows with rods, and if he see that his efforts avail nothing: let him also—what is greater—call in the prayer of himself and all the brothers for him: that God who can do all things may work a cure upon an infirm brother. But if he be not healed even in this way, then at last the abbot may use the pruning knife, as the apostle says: *Remove evil from you, etc.:* lest one diseased sheep contaminate the whole flock.

29. *Whether brothers who leave the monastery ought again to be received.* A brother who goes out, or is cast out, of the monastery for his own fault, if he wish to return, shall first promise every amends for the fault on account of which he

departed; and thus he shall be received into the lowest degree—so that thereby his humility may be proved. But if he again depart, up to the third time he shall be received. Knowing that after this every opportunity of return is denied to him.

30. *Concerning boys under age, how they shall be corrected.* Every age or intelligence ought to have its proper bounds. Therefore as often as boys or youths, or those who are less able to understand how great is the punishment of excommunication: as often as such persons offend, they shall either be afflicted with excessive fasts, or coerced with severe blows, that they may be healed.

31. *Concerning the cellarer of the monastery, what sort of a person he shall be.* As cellarer of the monastery there shall be elected from the congregation one who is wise, mature in character, sober, not given to much eating, not proud, not turbulent, not an upbraider, not tardy, not prodigal, but fearing God: a father, as it were, to the whole congregation. He shall take care of every thing, he shall do nothing without the order of the abbot. He shall have charge of what things are ordered: he shall not rebuff the brethren. If any brother by chance demand anything unreasonably from him, he shall not, by spurning, rebuff him; but reasonably, with humility, shall deny to him who wrongly seeks.

Let him guard his soul, mindful always of that saying of the apostle, that he who ministers well purchases to himself a good degree. He shall care with all solicitude for the infirm and youthful, for guests and for the poor; knowing without doubt that he shall render account for all of these at the day of judgment. All the utensils of the monastery, and all its substance, he shall look upon as though they were the sacred vessels of the altar. He shall deem nothing worthy of neglect; nor shall he give way to avarice; nor shall he be prodigal or a squanderer of the substance of the monastery; but he shall do everything with moderation and according to the order of the abbot. He shall have humility above all things: and when there is nothing substantial for him to give, let a good word of reply be offered, as it is written: *a good word is above the best gift.* Every thing which the abbot orders him to have, let him have under his care; what he prohibits let him

refrain from. To the brethren he shall offer the fixed measure of food without any haughtiness or delay, in order that they be not offended; being mindful of the divine saying as to what he merits *who offends one of these little ones*. If the congregation is rather large, assistants shall be given him; by whose aid he himself, with a calm mind, shall fill the office committed to him. At suitable hours those things shall be given which are to be given, and those things shall be asked for which are to be asked for: so that no one may be disturbed or rebuffed in the house of God.

32. *Concerning the utensils or property of the monastery.* For the belongings of the monastery in utensils, or garments, or property of any kind, the abbot shall provide brothers of whose life and morals he is sure; and to them as he shall see fit he shall consign the different things to be taken care of and collected. Concerning which the abbot shall keep a list, so that when in turn the brothers succeed each other in the care of the things assigned, he may know what he gives or what he receives. If moreover any one have soiled or treated negligently the property of the monastery, he shall be rebuked; but if he do not amend, he shall be subjected to the discipline of the Rule.

33. *Whether the monks should have any thing of their own.* More than any thing else is this special vice to be cut off root and branch from the monastery, that one should presume to give or receive anything without the order of the abbot, or should have anything of his own. He should have absolutely not anything: neither a book, nor tablets, nor a pen—nothing at all.—For indeed it is not allowed to the monks to have their own bodies or wills in their own power. But all things necessary they must expect from the Father of the monastery; nor is it allowable to have anything which the abbot did not give or permit. All things shall be common to all, as it is written: *Let not any man presume or call anything his own*. But if any one shall have been discovered delighting in this most evil vice: being warned once and again, if he do not amend, let him be subjected to punishment.

34. *Whether all ought to receive necessaries equally.* As it is written: *It was divided among them singly, according as each had need*: whereby we do not say—far from it—that there should be an excepting of persons, but a consideration for infirmities.

Wherefore he who needs less, let him thank God and not be dismayed; but he who needs more, let him be humiliated on account of his infirmity, and not exalted on account of the mercy that is shown him. And thus all members will be in peace. Above all, let not the evil of murmuring appear, for any cause, through any word or sign whatever. But, if such a murmurer is discovered, he shall be subjected to stricter discipline.

35. *Concerning the weekly officers of the kitchen.* The brothers shall so serve each other in turn that no one shall be excused from the duty of cooking, unless either through sickness, or because he is occupied in some important work of utility. For, by this means, charity and a greater reward are acquired. Moreover assistants shall be provided for the weak, so that they may not do this as a burden, but may all have helpers according to the size of the congregation or the nature of the place. If the congregation is a large one the cellarer, or any who, as we have said, are occupied with matters of greater utility, shall be excused from cooking. The rest shall serve each other in turn with all charity. At the end of the week he (the weekly cook) shall, on Saturday, do the cleansing. He shall wash the towels with which the brothers wipe their hands or feet. Moreover as well he who enters into as well as he who goes out (of office) shall wash the feet of every body. He shall give back the vessels of his ministry clean and whole to the cellarer. And he, the cellarer, shall consign them thus to the one entering (into office), so that he shall know what he gives or what he receives. The weekly cooks moreover, one hour before the hour of refection, shall receive the measure of food previously fixed upon: the different drinking vessels, namely, and the bread; so that at the hour of refection, without murmuring and without heavy labour, they may serve their brothers. On solemn days moreover they shall fast until mass. The incoming and the outgoing weekly officers, moreover, shall, in the oratory, as soon as matins are finished on Sunday, prostrate themselves at the feet of all, begging to be prayed for. Furthermore he who has finished his week shall say this verse: *Blessed art Thou oh Lord God, who hast aided and consoled me.* This being said for the third time, he who retires shall receive the benediction. He who is entering shall follow and shall say: *O God come to my aid, O Lord hasten to*

help me. And this shall be repeated three times by all. And, receiving the benediction, he shall enter (upon his office).

36. *Concerning infirm brothers.* Before all, and above all, attention shall be paid to the care of the sick; so that they shall be served as if it were actually Christ. For He Himself said: *I was sick and ye visited Me.* And: *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these ye have done it unto Me.* But let the sick also consider that they are being served to the honour of God; and let them not offend by their abundance the brothers who serve them: which (offences) nevertheless are patiently to be borne, for, from such, a greater reward is acquired. Wherefore, let the abbot take the greatest care lest they suffer neglect. And for these infirm brothers a cell by itself shall be set apart, and a servitor, God-fearing, and diligent and careful. The use of baths shall be offered to the sick as often as it is necessary: to the healthy, and especially to youths, it shall not be so readily conceded. But also the eating of flesh shall be allowed to the sick, and altogether to the feeble, for their rehabilitation. But when they have grown better, they shall all, in the usual manner, abstain from flesh. The abbot, moreover, shall take the greatest care lest the sick are neglected by the cellarer or by the servitors: for whatever fault is committed by the disciples rebounds upon him.

37.

Although human nature itself is prone to have pity for these ages—that is, old age and infancy,—nevertheless the authority of the Rule also has regard for them. Their weakness shall always be considered, and in the matter of food, the strict tenor of the Rule shall by no means be observed, as far as they are concerned; but they shall be treated with pious consideration, and may anticipate the canonical hours.

38. *Concerning the weekly reader.* At the tables of the brothers when they eat the reading should not fail; nor may any one at random dare to take up the book and begin to read there; but he who is about to read for the whole week shall begin his duties on Sunday. And, entering upon his office after mass and communion, he shall ask all to pray for him, that God may avert from him the

spirit of elation. And this verse shall be said in the oratory three times by all, he however beginning it: "O Lord open Thou my lips and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise." And thus, having received the benediction, he shall enter upon his duties as reader. And there shall be the greatest silence at table, so that the muttering or the voice of no one shall be heard there, except that of the reader alone. But whatever things are necessary to those eating and drinking, the brothers shall so furnish them to each other in turn, that no one shall need to ask for anything. But if, nevertheless, something is wanted, it shall rather be sought by the employment of some sign than by the voice. Nor shall any one presume there to ask questions concerning the reading or anything else; nor shall an opportunity be given: unless perhaps the prior wishes to say something, briefly, for the purpose of edifying. Moreover the brother who reads for the week shall receive bread and wine before he begins to read, on account of the holy communion, and lest, perchance, it might be injurious for him to sustain a fast. Afterwards, moreover, he shall eat with the weekly cooks and the servitors. The brothers, moreover, shall read or sing not in rotation; but the ones shall do so who will edify their hearers.

39.

We believe, moreover, that, for the daily refecton of the sixth as well as of the ninth hour, two cooked dishes, on account of the infirmities of the different ones, are enough for all tables: so that whoever, perchance, can not eat of one may partake of the other. Therefore let two cooked dishes suffice for all the brothers: and, if it is possible to obtain apples or growing vegetables, a third may be added. One full pound of bread shall suffice for a day, whether there be one refecton, or a breakfast and a supper. But if they are going to have supper, the third part of that same pound shall be reserved by the cellarer, to be given back to those who are about to sup. But if, perchance, some greater labour shall have been performed, it shall be in the will and the power of the abbot, if it is expedient, to increase anything; surfeiting above all things being guarded against, so that indigestion may never seize a monk: for nothing is so contrary to every Christian as surfeiting, as our Lord

says: *Take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting.* But to younger boys the same quantity shall not be served, but less than that to the older ones; moderation being observed in all things. But the eating of the flesh of quadrupeds shall be abstained from altogether by every one, excepting alone the weak and the sick.

40. *Concerning the amount of drink.* Each one has his own gift from God, the one in this way, the other in that. Therefore it is with some hesitation that the amount of daily sustenance for others is fixed by us. Nevertheless, in view of the weakness of the infirm we believe that a hemina^o of wine a day is enough for each one. Those moreover to whom God gives the ability of bearing abstinence shall know that they will have their own reward. But the prior shall judge if either the needs of the place, or labour or the heat of summer, requires more; considering in all things lest satiety or drunkenness creep in. Indeed we read that wine is not suitable for monks at all. But because, in our day, it is not possible to persuade the monks of this, let us agree at least as to the fact that we should not drink till we are sated, but sparingly. For wine can make even the wise to go astray. Where, moreover, the necessities of the place are such that the amount written above can not be found,—but much less or nothing at all,—those who live there shall bless God and shall not murmur. And we admonish them as to this above all: that they be without murmuring.

41. *At what hours the brothers ought to take their refectio.* From the holy Easter time until Pentecost the brothers shall have their refectio at the sixth hour; and at evening they shall sup. From Pentecost, moreover, through the whole summer,—if the monks do not have hard labour in the fields, or the extreme heat of the summer does not prevent them,—they shall fast on the fourth and sixth day until the ninth hour: but on the other days they shall have their repast at the sixth hour. Which sixth hour, if they have ordinary work in the fields, or if the heat of summer is not great, shall be kept to for the repast; and it shall be for the abbot to decide. And he shall so temper and arrange all things, that their souls may be saved on the one hand; and that, on the other, what the brothers do they shall do without any justifiable

^oNot quite half a liter.—Ed.

murmuring. Moreover, from the Ides of September until the beginning of Lent, they shall always have their refectation at the ninth hour. But in Lent, until Easter, they shall have their refectation at Vesper time. And that same Vesper meal shall be so arranged that those who take their repast may not need the light of a lantern; but everything shall be consumed while it is still daylight. But indeed at all times, the hour, whether of supper or of refectation, shall be so arranged, that everything may be done while it is still light.

42. *That after "completorium" no one shall speak.* At all times the monks ought to practise silence, but most of all in the nocturnal hours. And thus at all times, whether of fasting or of eating: if it be meal-time, as soon as they have risen from the table, all shall sit together and one shall read selections or lives of the Fathers, or indeed anything which will edify the hearers. But not the Pentateuch or Kings; for, to weak intellects, it will be of no use at that hour to hear this part of Scripture; but they shall be read at other times. But if the days are fast days, when Vespers have been said, after a short interval they shall come to the reading of the selections as we have said; and four or five pages, or as much as the hour permits having been read, they shall all congregate, upon the cessation of the reading. If, by chance, any one is occupied in a task assigned to him, he shall nevertheless approach. All therefore being gathered together, they shall say the completing prayer; and, going out from the "completorium," there shall be no further opportunity for any one to say anything. But if any one be found acting contrary to this rule of silence, he shall be subjected to a very severe punishment. Unless a necessity in the shape of guests should arise, or the abbot, by chance, should give some order. But even this, indeed, he shall do most seriously, with all gravity and moderation.

43. *Concerning those who come late to Divine Service or to table.* As soon as the signal for the hour of Divine Service has been heard, leaving everything that they had in hand they shall run with the greatest haste; with gravity, however, in order that scurrility may find no nourishment. Therefore let nothing be preferred to the service of God. But if any one should come to the nocturnal vigils after the *Gloria* of the ninety-fourth psalm—which on this account

we wish to have said quite lingeringly and with delay,—he shall not stand in his place in the choir, but shall stand last of all, or in a place which the abbot shall have set apart for such dilatory ones; that he may be seen by him or by all, until, the Divine Service being ended, he may show his repentance by giving public satisfaction. Moreover this is the reason why we have decreed that they ought to stand last or apart: that, being seen by all, even for very shame they may amend. For if they remain outside the oratory, there may be one perhaps who will either go back and go to sleep, or at any rate will sit down outside, or will give way to idle thoughts, and a chance will be given to the evil one. He shall rather enter within, that he lose not the whole, and that he amend for the time that remains. Moreover in the day time he who does not come to the Divine Service after the verse, and the *Gloria* of the first psalm which is said after the verse—according to the rule which we mentioned above,—shall stand last. Nor shall he presume to join the choir of singers until he render satisfaction; unless, indeed, the abbot allow him to do so by his permission, under condition that the guilty one shall afterwards render satisfaction. Moreover he who does not come to table before the verse, so that all together may say the verse and pray, and all as one may go to table: he who, through his negligence or fault, does not come, shall be rebuked for this up to the second time. If again he do not amend, he shall not be allowed to share in the common table; but, separated from the companionship of all, shall have his refectio alone, his portion of wine being taken away from him until he render satisfaction and make amends. He, moreover, who is not present at that verse which is said after the meal shall suffer in like manner. Nor shall any one presume, before the hour fixed, or after it, to take any food or drink for himself. But if anything is offered to any one by the prior, and he refuse to accept it: at the hour when he desires that which he first refused, he shall not receive it or anything else at all, until he makes suitable amends.

44. *Concerning those who are excommunicated, how they shall render satisfaction.* He who, for graver faults, is excommunicated from the oratory and from table, shall, at the hour when the Divine Service is being celebrated in the oratory, lie prostrate before the gates of the oratory saying nothing, his head being placed not

otherwise than on the ground, lying headlong before the feet of all who go out from the oratory. And he shall continue doing this until the abbot shall judge that he have rendered satisfaction. And when he shall enter at the order of the abbot, he shall grovel at the feet of the abbot, and then of all, that they may pray for him. And then, if the abbot order it, he shall be received into the choir or into the grade which the abbot decrees: in such wise, nevertheless, that he may not presume to start a psalm, or a lesson, or anything else in the oratory, unless the abbot again order him to. And at all hours when the Divine Service reaches its end, he shall throw himself on the ground in the place where he stands: and shall render satisfaction in this way until the abbot orders him to desist at length from doing so. But those who, for light faults, are excommunicated from table alone, shall render satisfaction in the oratory: they shall do this until the abbot gives the order; until he blesses them and says, "it is enough."

45. *Concerning those who make mistakes in the oratory.* If any one, in saying a psalm, response, or antiphone or lesson, make a mistake: unless he humble himself there before all, giving satisfaction, he shall be subjected to greater punishment, as one who was unwilling to correct by humility that in which he had erred by neglect. But children, for such a fault, shall be whipped.

46. *Concerning those who err in any other matters.* If any one commit any fault while at any labour, in the kitchen, in the cellar, in the offices, in the bakery, while labouring at any art, or in any place; or shall break or lose anything, or commit any excess wherever he may be; and do not himself, coming before the abbot or the congregation, of his own accord give satisfaction and declare his error: if it become known through another, he shall be subjected to greater amends. But if the cause of his sin lie hidden in his soul, he may declare it to the abbot alone or to his spiritual elders; who may know how to cure his wounds, and not to uncover and make public those of another.

47. *Concerning the announcement of the hour of Divine Service.* The announcing of the hour of Divine Service, by night and by day, shall be the work of the abbot: either to announce it himself, or to enjoin this care on a brother so zealous that everything shall be fulfilled at the proper hours. And those who are

ordered to, shall, after the abbot, start the psalms or antiphones in their proper order. No one moreover shall presume to sing or to read unless he can fulfill this duty so that those hearing him shall be edified. And he whom the abbot orders to, shall do this with humility and gravity and trembling.

48. *Concerning the daily manual labour.* Idleness is the enemy of the soul. And therefore, at fixed times, the brothers ought to be occupied in manual labour; and again, at fixed times, in sacred reading. Therefore we believe that, according to this disposition, both seasons ought to be arranged; so that, from Easter until the Calends of October, going out early, from the first until the fourth hour they shall do what labour may be necessary. Moreover, from the fourth hour until about the sixth, they shall be free for reading. After the meal of the sixth hour, moreover, rising from table, they shall rest in their beds with all silence; or, perchance, he that wishes to read may so read to himself that he do not disturb another. And the *nona* (the second meal) shall be gone through with more moderately about the middle of the eighth hour; and again they shall work at what is to be done until Vespers. But, if the exigency or poverty of the place demands that they be occupied by themselves in picking fruits, they shall not be dismayed: for then they are truly monks if they live by the labours of their hands; as did also our fathers and the apostles. Let all things be done with moderation, however, on account of the fainthearted. From the Calends of October, moreover, until the beginning of Lent they shall be free for reading until the second full hour. At the second hour the *tertia* (morning service) shall be held, and all shall labour at the task which is enjoined upon them until the ninth. The first signal, moreover, of the ninth hour having been given, they shall each one leave off his work; and be ready when the second signal strikes. Moreover after the refectio they shall be free for their readings or for psalms. But in the days of Lent, from dawn until the third full hour, they shall be free for their readings; and, until the tenth full hour, they shall do the labour that is enjoined on them. In which days of Lent they shall all receive separate books from the library; which they shall read entirely through in order. These books are to be given out on the first day of Lent. Above all there shall certainly be appointed one or two elders, who shall go round

the monastery at the hours in which the brothers are engaged in reading, and see to it that no troublesome brother chance to be found who is open to idleness and trifling, and is not intent on his reading; being not only of no use to himself, but also stirring up others. If such a one—may it not happen—be found, he shall be admonished once and a second time. If he do not amend, he shall be subject under the Rule to such punishment that the others may have fear. Nor shall brother join brother at unsuitable hours. Moreover on Sunday all shall engage in reading: excepting those who are deputed to various duties. But if anyone be so negligent and lazy that he will not or can not read, some task shall be imposed upon him which he can do; so that he be not idle. On feeble or delicate brothers such a labour or art is to be imposed, that they shall neither be idle, nor shall they be so oppressed by the violence of labour as to be driven to take flight. Their weakness is to be taken into consideration by the abbot.

49. Although at all times the life of the monk should be such as though Lent were being observed: nevertheless, since few have that virtue, we urge that, on those said days of Lent, he shall keep his life in all purity; and likewise wipe out, in those holy days, the negligencies of other times. This is then worthily done if we refrain from all vices, if we devote ourselves to prayer with weeping, to reading and compunction of heart, and to abstinence. Therefore, on these days, let us add of ourselves something to the ordinary amount of our service: special prayers, abstinence from food and drink;—so that each one, over and above the amount allotted to him, shall offer of his own will something to God with rejoicing of the Holy Spirit. That is, he shall restrict his body in food, drink, sleep, talkativeness, and merry-making; and, with the joy of a spiritual desire, shall await the holy Easter. The offering, moreover, that each one makes, he shall announce to his abbot; that it may be done with his prayers and by his will. For what is done without the permission of the spiritual Father, shall be put down to presumption and vain glory, and not to a monk's credit. Therefore all things are to be done according to the will of the abbot.

50. *Concerning brothers who labour far from the oratory, or who are on a journey.* Brothers who are at work very far off, and cannot betake themselves at the proper hour to the oratory, shall, if

the abbot deem this to be the case, celebrate the Divine Service there where they are at work; bending their knees in the fear of God. Likewise as to those who are sent on a journey: the established hours shall not escape them; but, according as they can, they shall perform of themselves, and not neglect to render, the rightful amount of service.

51. *Concerning brothers who do not journey very far.* A brother who is sent for any reply, and is expected to return to the monastery on the same day, shall not presume to eat outside, even if he be asked to by any one; unless perchance he be told to by his abbot. But if he do otherwise he shall be excommunicated.

52. *Concerning the oratory of the monastery.* The oratory shall be that which it is called; nor shall any thing else be done there or placed there. When the Divine Service is ended, let all go out with perfect silence and let reverence be paid to God: so that a brother who perchance especially desires to pray for himself, may not be impeded by the wickedness of another. But, if another wishes perchance to pray more secretly for himself, he shall simply enter and pray; not with a clamorous voice, but with tears, and inclining his heart. Therefore he who does not perform a similar act, shall not be permitted, when the Divine Service is ended, to remain in the oratory—as has been said—lest another suffer hindrance.

53. *Concerning the reception of guests.* All guests who come shall be received as though they were Christ: for He Himself said: *I was a stranger and ye took Me in.* And to all, fitting honour shall be shown; but, most of all, to servants of the faith and to pilgrims. When, therefore, a guest is announced, the prior or the brothers shall run to meet him, with every office of love. And first they shall pray together; and thus they shall be joined together in peace. Which kiss of peace shall not first be offered, unless a prayer have preceded; on account of the wiles of the devil. In the salutation itself, moreover, all humility shall be exhibited. In the case of all guests arriving or departing: with inclined head, or with prostrating of the whole body upon the ground, Christ, who is also received in them, shall be adored. The guests moreover, having been received, shall be conducted to prayer; and afterwards the prior, or one whom he himself orders, shall sit with them. The law of God shall be read before the guest that he may be edified; and,

after this, every kindness shall be exhibited. A fast may be broken by the prior on account of a guest; unless, perchance, it be a special day of fast which can not be violated. The brothers, moreover, shall continue their customary fasts. The abbot shall give water into the hands of his guests; and the abbot as well as the whole congregation shall wash the feet of all guests. This being done, they shall say this verse: "We have received, oh Lord, Thy loving-kindness in the midst of Thy temple." Chiefly in the reception of the poor and of pilgrims shall care be most anxiously exhibited: for in them Christ is received the more. For the very fear of the rich exacts honour for them. The kitchen of the abbot and the guests shall be by itself; so that guests coming at uncertain hours, as is always happening in a monastery, may not disturb the brothers. Into the control of which kitchen, two brothers, who can well fulfill that duty, shall enter yearly; and to them, according as they shall need it, help shall be administered; so that they may serve without murmuring. And again, when they are less occupied, they shall go out where they are commanded to, and labour. And not only in their case, but in all the offices of the monastery, such consideration shall be had, that, when they need it, help shall be given to them. And, when they are again at leisure, they shall obey orders. Likewise a brother, whose soul the fear of God possesses, shall have assigned to him the cell of the guests, where there shall be beds sufficiently strewn; and the house of God shall be administered wisely by the wise. Moreover he who has not been ordered to shall by no means join the guests or speak to them. But if he meet them or see them, saluting them humbly, as has been said, and seeking their blessing, he shall pass by, saying that he is not allowed to speak with a guest.

54. *Whether a monk should be allowed to receive letters or anything.* By no means shall it be allowed to a monk—either from his relatives, or from any man, or from one of his fellows—to receive or to give, without order of the abbot, letters, presents or any gift, however small. But even if, by his relatives, anything has been sent to him: he shall not presume to receive it, unless it have first been shown to the abbot. But if he order it to be received, it shall be in the power of the abbot to give it to whomever he may will. And the brother to whom it happened to

have been sent shall not be chagrined; that an opportunity be not given to the devil. Whoever, moreover, presumes otherwise, shall be subject to the discipline of the Rule.

55.

Vestments shall be given to the brothers according to the quality of the places where they dwell, or the temperature of the air. For in cold regions more is required; but in warm, less. This, therefore, is a matter for the abbot to decide. We nevertheless consider that for ordinary places there suffices for the monks a cowl and gown apiece—the cowl, in winter hairy, in summer plain or old,—and a working garment, on account of their labours. As clothing for the feet, shoes and boots. Concerning the colour and size of all of which things the monks shall not talk; but they shall be such as can be found in the province where they are or as can be bought the most cheaply. The abbot, moreover, shall provide, as to the measure, that those vestments be not short for those using them; but of suitable length. And, when new ones are received, they shall always straightway return the old ones, to be kept in the vestiary on account of the poor. It is enough, moreover, for a monk to have two gowns and two cowls; on account of the nights, and on account of washing the things themselves. Every thing, then, that is over this is superfluous, and ought to be removed. And the shoes, and whatever is old, they shall return when they receive something new. And those who are sent on a journey shall receive cloths for the loins from the vestiary; which on their return they shall restore, having washed them. And there shall be cowls and gowns somewhat better than those which they have ordinarily: which, when they start on a journey, they shall receive from the vestiary, and, on returning, shall restore. As trappings for the beds, moreover, shall suffice a mat, a woollen covering, a woollen cloth under the pillow, and the pillow. And these beds are frequently to be searched by the abbot on account of private property; lest he find some. And, if any thing is found belonging to any one which he did not receive from the abbot, he shall be subjected to the most severe discipline. And, in order that this special vice may be cut off at the roots, there shall be given by the abbot all things which are necessary: that is, a cowl,

a gown, shoes, boots, a binder for the loins, a knife, a pen, a needle, a handkerchief, tablets: so that all excuse of necessity shall be removed. By the same abbot, however, that sentence of the Acts of the Apostles shall always be regarded: *For there was given unto each man according unto his need*. Thus, therefore, the abbot also shall consider the infirmities of the needy, not the evil will of the envious. In all his judgments, nevertheless, he shall remember the retribution of God.

56. *Concerning the table of the abbot.* The table of the abbot shall always be with the guests and pilgrims. As often, however, as guests are lacking, it shall be in his power to summon those of the brothers whom he wishes. He shall see, nevertheless, that one or two elders are always left with the brothers, for the sake of discipline.

57. *Concerning the artificers of the monastery.* Artificers, if there are any in the monastery, shall practise with all humility their special arts, if the abbot permit it. But if any one of them becomes inflated with pride on account of knowledge of his art, to the extent that he seems to be conferring something on the monastery: such a one shall be plucked away from that art; and he shall not again return to it unless the abbot perchance again orders him to, he being humiliated. But, if anything from the works of the artificers is to be sold, they themselves shall take care through whose hands they (the works) are to pass, lest they (the intermediaries) presume to commit some fraud upon the monastery. They shall always remember Ananias and Sapphira; lest, perchance, the death that they suffered with regard to the body, these, or all those who have committed any fraud as to the property of the monastery, may suffer with regard to the soul. In the prices themselves, moreover, let not the evil of avarice crop out: but let the object always be given a little cheaper than it is given by other and secular persons; so that, in all things, God shall be glorified.

58. *Concerning the manner of receiving brothers.* When any new comer applies for conversion, an easy entrance shall not be granted him: but, as the apostle says, *Try the spirits if they be of God*. Therefore, if he who comes perseveres in knocking, and is seen after four or five days to patiently endure the insults inflicted upon him, and the difficulty of ingress, and to persist in his

demand: entrance shall be allowed him, and he shall remain for a few days in the cell of the guests. After this, moreover, he shall be in the cell of the novices, where he shall meditate and eat and sleep. And an elder shall be detailed off for him who shall be capable of saving souls, who shall altogether intently watch over him, and make it a care to see if he reverently seek God, if he be zealous in the service of God, in obedience, in suffering shame. And all the harshness and roughness of the means through which God is approached shall be told him in advance. If he promise perseverance in his steadfastness, after the lapse of two months this Rule shall be read to him in order, and it shall be said to him: Behold the law under which thou dost wish to serve; if thou canst observe it, enter; but if thou canst not, depart freely. If he have stood firm thus far, then he shall be led into the aforesaid cell of the novices; and again he shall be proven with all patience. And, after the lapse of six months, the Rule shall be read to him; that he may know upon what he is entering. And, if he stand firm thus far, after four months the same Rule shall again be re-read to him. And if, having deliberated with himself, he shall promise to keep everything, and to obey all the commands that are laid upon him: then he shall be received in the congregation; knowing that it is decreed, by the law of the Rule, that from that day he shall not be allowed to depart from the monastery, nor to shake free his neck from the yoke of the Rule, which, after such tardy deliberation, he was at liberty either to refuse or receive. He who is to be received, moreover, shall, in the oratory, in the presence of all, make promise concerning his steadfastness and the change in his manner of life and his obedience to God and to His saints; so that if, at any time, he act contrary, he shall know that he shall be condemned by Him Whom he mocks. Concerning which promise he shall make a petition in the name of the saints whose relics are there, and of the abbot who is present. Which petition he shall write with his own hand. Or, if he really be not learned in letters, another, being asked by him, shall write it. And that novice shall make his sign; and with his own hand shall place it (the petition) above the altar. And when he has placed it there, the novice shall straightway commence this verse: "Receive me oh Lord according to thy promise and I shall live, and do not cast me down

from my hope." Which verse the whole congregation shall repeat three times, adding: "Glory be to the Father." Then that brother novice shall prostrate himself at the feet of each one, that they may pray for him. And, already, from that day, he shall be considered as in the congregation. If he have any property, he shall either first present it to the poor, or, making a solemn donation, shall confer it on the monastery, keeping nothing at all for himself: as one, forsooth, who from that day, shall know that he shall not have power even over his own body. Straightway, therefore in the oratory, he shall take off his own garments in which he was clad, and shall put on the garments of the monastery. Moreover those garments which he has taken off shall be placed in the vestiary to be preserved; so that if, at any time, the devil persuading him, he shall consent to go forth from the monastery—may it not happen,—then, taking off the garments of the monastery, he may be cast out. That petition of his, nevertheless, which the abbot took from above the altar, he shall not receive again; but it shall be preserved in the monastery.

59. *Concerning the sons of nobles or of poor men who are presented.* If by chance any one of the nobles offers his son to God in the monastery: if the boy himself is a minor in age, his parents shall make the petition which we spoke of above. And, with an oblation, they shall enwrap that petition and the hand of the boy in the linen cloth of the altar; and thus they shall offer him. Concerning their property, moreover, either they shall promise in the present petition, under an oath, that they will never, either through some chosen person, or in any way whatever, give him any thing at any time, or furnish him with the means of possessing it. Or, indeed, if they be not willing to do this, and wish to offer something as alms to the monastery for their salvation, they shall make a donation of the things which they wish to give to the monastery; retaining for themselves, if they wish, the usufruct. And let all things be so observed that no suspicion may remain with the boy; by which being deceived he might perish—which God forbid,—as we have learned by experience. The poorer ones shall also do likewise. Those, however, who have nothing at all shall simply make their petition; and, with an oblation, shall offer their son before witnesses.

60. *Concerning priests who may chance to wish to dwell in the monastery.* If anyone of the order of priests ask to be received in the monastery, assent, indeed, shall not too quickly be given him. Nevertheless, if he altogether persist in this supplication, he shall know that he must observe all the discipline of the Rule; nor shall anything be relaxed unto him, that it may be as it is written: *Friend, wherefore art thou come?* Nevertheless it shall be allowed to him to stand after the abbot, and to give the benediction, or to hold mass; if, however, the abbot order him to. But, otherwise, he shall by no means presume to do anything, knowing that he is subject to the discipline of the Rule, and that, all the more, he shall give an example of humility to all. And if he chance to be present in the monastery for the sake of an ordination or anything, he shall expect the position that he had when he entered the monastery; not that which has been conceded to him out of reverence for his priesthood. Moreover, if any one of the clergy desire similarly to be associated with the monastery, he shall have a medium position given him. And he, none the less, shall make promise concerning his observance of the Rule, and concerning his own steadfastness.

61. *Concerning pilgrim monks, how they shall be received.* If any pilgrim monk come from distant parts,—if he wish as a guest to dwell in the monastery, and will be content with the customs which he finds in the place, and do not perchance by his lavishness disturb the monastery, but is simply content with what he finds: he shall be received for as long a time as he desires. If, indeed, he find fault with anything, or expose it, reasonably, and with the humility of charity: the abbot shall discuss it prudently, lest perchance God had sent him for this very thing. But if, afterwards, he wish to establish himself lastingly, such a wish shall not be refused: and all the more, since, in the time of his sojourn as guest, his manner of life could have become known. But, if he have been found lavish or vicious in the time of his sojourn as guest,—not only ought he not to be joined to the body of the monastery, but also it shall be said to him, honestly, that he must depart; lest, by sympathy with him, others also become contaminated. But, if he be not such a one as to merit being cast out: not only if he ask it, shall he be received and associated with the congregation, but he shall also be urged to remain; that by his example others may be instructed. For in every

place one God is served, and one King is warred for. And if the abbot perceive him to be such a one, he may be allowed to place him in a somewhat higher position. For the abbot can place not only a monk, but also one from the above grades of priests or clergy, in a greater place than that in which he enters; if he perceive their life to be such a one as to demand it. Moreover the abbot must take care lest, at any time, he receive a monk to dwell (with him) from another known monastery, without the consent of his abbot or letters of commendation. For it is written: *Do not unto another what thou wilt not that one do unto thee.*

62.

If any abbot seek to ordain for himself a priest or deacon, he shall elect from among his fold one who is worthy to perform the office of a priest. He who is ordained, moreover, shall beware of elation or pride. Nor shall he presume to do anything at all unless what he is ordered to by the abbot; knowing that he is all the more subject to the Rule. Nor, by reason of the priesthood, shall he forget obedience and discipline; but he shall advance more and more towards God. But he shall always expect to hold that position which he had when he entered the monastery: except when performing the service of the altar, and if, perchance, the election of the congregation and the will of the abbot incline to promote him on account of his merit of life. He shall, nevertheless, know that he is to observe the rule constituted for him by the deans or provosts: and that, if he presume otherwise, he shall be considered not a priest but a rebel. And if, having often been admonished, he do not amend: even the bishop shall be called in in testimony. But if, even then, he do not amend, his faults being glaring, he shall be thrust forth from the monastery. That is, if his contumaciousness shall have been of such a kind, that he was not willing to be subject to or to obey the Rule.

63. *Concerning rank in the congregation.* They shall preserve their rank in the monastery according as the time of their conversion and the merit of their life decrees; and as the abbot ordains. And the abbot shall not perturb the flock committed to him; nor, using as it were an arbitrary power, shall he unjustly dispose

anything. But he shall always reflect that he is to render account to God for all his judgments and works. Therefore, according to the order which he has decreed, or which the brothers themselves have held: thus they shall go to the absolution, to the communion, to the singing of the psalm, to their place in the choir. And in all places, altogether, age does not decide the rank or affect it; for Samuel and Daniel, as boys, judged the priests. Therefore excepting those who, as we have said, the abbot has, for a higher reason, preferred, or, for certain causes, degraded: all the rest, as they are converted, so they remain. Thus, for example, he who comes to the monastery at the second hour of the day, may know that he is younger than he who came at the first hour of the day, of whatever age or dignity he be. And, in the case of boys, discipline shall be observed in all things by all. The juniors, therefore, shall honour their seniors; the seniors shall love their juniors. In the very calling of names, it shall be allowed to no one to call another simply by his name: but the seniors shall call their juniors by the name of brothers. The juniors, moreover, shall call their seniors "nonni," which indicates paternal reverence. The abbot, moreover, because he is believed to be Christ's representative, shall be called Master and Abbot; not by his assumption, but through honour and love for Christ. His thoughts moreover shall be such, and he shall show himself such, that he may be worthy of such honour. Moreover, wherever the brothers meet each other, the junior shall seek a blessing from the senior. When the greater one passes, the lesser one shall rise and give him a place to sit down. Nor shall the junior presume to sit unless his senior bid him; so that it shall be done as is written: *Vying with each other in honour*. Boys, little ones or youths, shall obtain their places in the oratory or at table with discipline as the end in view. Out of doors moreover, or wherever they are, they shall be guarded and disciplined; until they come to an intelligent age.

64. *Concerning the ordination of an abbot.* In ordaining an abbot this consideration shall always be observed: that such a one shall be put into office as the whole congregation, according to the fear of God, with one heart—or even a part, however small, of the congregation with more prudent counsel—shall have chosen. He who is to be ordained, moreover, shall be elected for merit of life and learnedness in wisdom; even though he be the lowest in rank

in the congregation. But even if the whole congregation with one consent shall have elected a person consenting to their vices—which God forbid;—and those vices shall in any way come clearly to the knowledge of the bishop to whose diocese that place pertains, or to the neighbouring abbots or Christians: the latter shall not allow the consent of the wicked to prevail, but shall set up a dispenser worthy of the house of God; knowing that they will receive a good reward for this, if they do it chastely and with zeal for God. Just so they shall know, on the contrary, that they have sinned if they neglect it. The abbot who is ordained, moreover, shall reflect always what a burden he is undertaking, and to whom he is to render account of his stewardship. He shall know that he ought rather to be of help than to command. He ought, therefore, to be learned in the divine law, that he may know how to give forth both the new and the old; chaste, sober, merciful. He shall always exalt mercy over judgment, that he may obtain the same. He shall hate vice, he shall love the brethren. In his blame itself he shall act prudently and do nothing excessive; lest, while he is too desirous of removing the rust, the vessel be broken. And he shall always suspect his own frailty; and shall remember that a bruised reed is not to be crushed. By which we do not say that he shall permit vice to be nourished; but prudently, and with charity, he shall remove it, according as he finds it to be expedient in the case of each one, as we have already said. And he shall strive rather to be loved than feared. He shall not be troubled and anxious; he also shall not be too obstinate; he shall not be jealous and too suspicious; for then he will have no rest. In his commands he shall be provident, and shall consider whether they be of God or of the world. He shall use discernment and moderation with regard to the labours which he enjoins, thinking of the discretion of St. James who said: *if I overdrive my flocks they will die all in one day*. Accepting therefore this and other testimony of discretion the mother of the virtues, he shall so temper all things that there may be both what the strong desire, and the weak do not flee. And, especially, he shall keep the present Rule in all things; so that, when he hath ministered well, he shall hear from the Lord what that good servant did who obtained meat for his fellow servants in his day: *Verily I say unto you*, he said, *That he shall make him ruler over all his goods*.

65. *Concerning the provost of the monastery.* Very often, indeed, it happens that, through the ordination of a provost, grave scandals arise in monasteries; since there are some who, inflated with the evil spirit of pride, and thinking themselves to be second abbots, taking upon themselves to rule, nourish scandals, and make dissensions in the congregation; especially in those places where the provost is ordained by the same priest, or the same abbots, who ordain the abbot. How absurd this is, is easily seen; for, commencing with the ordination itself, a reason is given him for being proud, since it is suggested to him by his thoughts that he is exempt from the authority of his abbot in as much as he has been ordained by the same persons as the abbot. Hence arise envy, quarrels, detractions, emulations, dissensions, disturbances. And when the abbot and the provost differ mutually in their opinions, their souls, on the one hand, must be endangered by this dissension; and those who are under them, while they pay court to different sides, go to perdition. The evil of which danger is to be referred to those who have made themselves the causes of such things through the ordination. Wherefore we foresee that it is expedient, for the sake of maintaining peace and charity, that the ordering of his monastery shall rest with the will of the abbot. And, if it can be done, all the necessities of the monastery shall, as the abbot disposes, be seen to by deans, as we arranged before; so that, by committing them to many, one may not become proud. But if either the place demands it, or the congregation seeks it, the abbot shall, with the counsel of God-fearing brothers, reasonably and with humility, himself ordain for himself, as provost, whomever he shall choose. Which provost, nevertheless, shall do with reverence that which is enjoined upon him by his abbot, doing nothing contrary to the will or order of the abbot; for in as much as he is raised above the others, so much the more carefully should he observe the precepts of the Rule. Which provost, if he be found vicious, or deceived by the elation of pride; or if he be proved a despiser of the holy Rule; he shall be warned by words up to the fourth time. If he do not then amend, the correction of the discipline of the Rule shall be administered to him. But if he do not, even then, amend, he shall be cast down from the rank of a provost, and another who is worthy shall be called in his place. But if, even in the congregation, he be not quiet and obedient, he

shall also be expelled from the monastery. Nevertheless the abbot shall reflect that he is to render account to God for all his judgments; lest perchance a flame of envy or jealousy may burn his soul.

66. *Concerning the doorkeepers of the monastery.* At the door of the monastery shall be placed a wise old man who shall know how to receive a reply and to return one; whose ripeness of age will not permit him to trifle. Which doorkeeper ought to have a cell next to the door; so that those arriving may always find one present from whom they may receive a reply. And straightway, when any one has knocked, or a poor man has called out, he shall answer, "Thanks be to God?" or shall give the blessing; and with all the gentleness of the fear of God he shall hastily give a reply with the fervour of charity. And if this doorkeeper need assistance he may receive a younger brother.

A monastery, moreover, if it can be done, ought so to be arranged that everything necessary,—that is, water, a mill, a garden, a bakery,—may be made use of, and different arts be carried on, within the monastery; so that there shall be no need for the monks to wander about outside. For this is not at all good for their souls. We wish, moreover, that this Rule be read very often in the congregation; lest any of the brothers excuse himself on account of ignorance.

67. *Concerning brothers sent upon a journey.* Brothers who are to be sent upon a journey shall commend themselves to the prayers of all the brethren and of the abbot. And always, at the last prayer of the Divine Service, there shall be a calling to mind of all the absent ones. Having returned, moreover, from the journey—on the very day on which they return,—at all the canonical hours when the Divine Service is being carried on, prostrated on the floor of the oratory, they shall seek the prayers of all, on account of their excesses: lest perchance the sight of some evil thing, or the hearing of some idle discourse, may have met or happened to them on the journey. Let not any one presume to tell another what he has seen or heard outside of the monastery; for, very often, it means ruin. And if any one presume to, he shall be subject to the punishment of the Rule. Even so he who presumes to go beyond the confines of the monastery, or to go anywhere, or to do anything however trivial without the order of the abbot.

68. *If impossibilities are enjoined on a brother.* If on any brother by chance any burdensome or impossible tasks are enjoined, he shall receive indeed the command of him who orders with all gentleness and obedience. But if he shall see that the weight of the burden altogether exceeds the measure of his strength, he shall patiently and in due season suggest to him who is in authority the causes of the impossibility, but not with pride, or resisting, or contradicting. But if, after his suggestion, the command of the superior continue according to his first opinion, the junior shall know that thus it is expedient for him; and in all love, trusting in the aid of God, he shall obey.

69. *That, in the monastery, one shall not presume to defend another.* It is to be especially guarded against lest, on any occasion, one monk presume to defend another in the monastery, or to protect him as it were: even though they be joined by some nearness of relationship. Nor in any way shall the monks presume to do this; for thence can arise most grave occasion for scandals. But if any one transgress these commands, he shall be most severely punished.

70. *That no one shall presume to strike promiscuously.*—Every ground for presumption shall be forbidden in the monastery. We decree that it shall be allowed to no one to excommunicate or to strike any of his brothers; unless he be one to whom power is given by his abbot. Sinners, moreover, shall be called to account in the presence of all: so that the others may have fear. The care of disciplining, and the custody of children up to fifteen years of age, however, shall belong to all. But this also with all moderation and reason. For he who presumes in any way against one of riper age, without precept of the abbot; or who, even against children, becomes violent without discretion,—shall be subject to the discipline of the Rule; for it is written: *Do not unto another what thou wilt not that one do unto thee.*

71. *That they shall be mutually obedient.*—The virtue of obedience is not only to be exhibited by all to the abbot, but also the brothers shall be thus mutually obedient to each other; knowing that they shall approach God through this way of obedience. The command therefore of the abbot, or of the provosts who are constituted by him, being given the preference—since we do not allow private commands to have more

weight than his,—for the rest, all juniors shall obey their superiors with all charity and solicitude. But if any one is found contentious, he shall be punished. If, moreover, any brother, for any slight cause, be in any way rebuked by the abbot or by any one who is his superior; or if he feel, even lightly, that the mind of some superior is angered or moved against him, however little:—straightway, without delay, he shall so long lie prostrate at his feet, atoning, until, with the benediction, that anger shall be appeased. But if any one scorn to do this, he shall either be subjected to corporal punishment; or, if he be contumacious, he shall be expelled from the monastery.

72. *Concerning the good zeal which the monks ought to have.*—As there is an evil zeal of bitterness, which separates from God and leads to Hell; so there is a good zeal, which separates from vice and leads to God and to eternal life. Let the monks therefore exercise this zeal with the most fervent love: that is, let them mutually surpass each other in honour. Let them most patiently tolerate their weaknesses, whether of body or character; let them vie with each other in showing obedience. Let no one pursue what he thinks useful for himself, but rather what he thinks useful for another. Let them love the brotherhood with a chaste love; let them fear God; let them love their abbot with a sincere and humble love; let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ, Who leads us alike to eternal life.

73. *Concerning the fact that not every just observance is decreed in this Rule.*—We have written out this Rule, indeed, that we may show those observing it in the monasteries how to have some honesty of character, or beginning of conversion. But for those who hasten to the perfection of living, there are the teachings of the holy Fathers: the observance of which leads a man to the heights of perfection. For what page, or what discourse, of Divine authority of the Old or the New Testament is not a most perfect rule for human life? Or what book of the holy Catholic Fathers does not trumpet forth how by the right path we shall come to our Creator? Also the reading aloud of the Fathers, and their decrees, and their lives; also the Rule of our holy Father Basil—what else are they except instruments of virtue for well-living and obedient monks? We, moreover, blush with confusion

for the idle, and the evilly living and the negligent. Thou, therefore, whoever doth hasten to the celestial fatherland, perform with Christ's aid this Rule written out as the least of beginnings: and then at length, under God's protection, thou wilt come to the greater things that we have mentioned; to the summits of learning and virtue.

